

during April-June, 2000-2001 as compared to the trade deficit of US \$ 2369.37 million during same period last year leading to an increased demand of foreign currency. This is mainly due to the increase in value of oil imports.

Utilisation of a part of foreign currency by exporters abroad

†2969. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have approved utilization of a part of foreign currency by exporters abroad out of the amount earned by them from exports;

(b) if so, the amount of this share; and

(c) the annual average amount utilized by Indian exporters abroad in the past few years?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Exporters are allowed to retain a portion of their receipts in foreign exchange in Exchange Earners' Foreign Currency (EEFC) Account with authorized dealers, in India. Exportes can freely use the funds held in their EEFC accounts for all transactions of current account in nature. 100% Export Oriented Units and Units in Export Processing Zones/Software Technology Parks/Electronic Hardware Technology Parks are allowed to credit upto 35% of their export earning to EEFC accounts. Other exporters can credit 25% of their export earnings to EEFC accounts. Authorised Dealers are permitted to open and maintain such EEFC accounts.

(c) The Reserve Bank of India does not compile information regarding the amount utilized by Indian exporters abroad out of their EEFC balances.

WPI for primary commodities and manufactured products

2970. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 5185 given in the Rajya Sabha on 15th May, 2000 and state:

(a) the item-wise WPI for each week for primary commodities starting with 1st April, 2000 and ending with 15th July, 2000;

(b) the item-wise WPI for each week for manufactured products starting with 1st April, 2000 and ending with 15th July, 2000:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the arguments advanced by the working group for changing the basis of calculating inflation; and

(d) the assessment of Government as to which income bracket is facing comparative difficulty as a result of current trends of WPI movement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) Statement is given in the Annexure [see Appendix 190, Annexure No. 38]

(b) Statement is given in the Annexure. [See Appendix 190, Annexure No. 39]

(c) There is no change in the methodology for computation of inflation rate. However, the Working Group for the Revision of Index Numbers of Wholesale Prices in India [Base 1993-94=100], has in its report, recommended that a separate measure of inflation may be computed because a true measure of inflation should measure the prices only at the final demand level and not at intermediate demand level. The current WPI is a mix of both.

(d) No such assessment has been made. However, the Government continues to be guided by the 1993-94 Lakdawala Committee assessment of population below the poverty line for which the Government is committed to supply food grains at half the economic cost through PDS. This policy is motivated by protecting the low income population from the rise in market prices of essential commodities such as food grains.

Augmenting of State in Anti-Dumping Directorate

2971. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of dumping reported by the industry during the last two years;

(b) the number of these cases investigated;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Anti-Dumping Directorate is not adequately staffed to handle these cases; and

(d) the steps being taken to augment the staff strength to handle such cases which might be reported in increasing numbers with the removal of Quantitative Restrictions after April, 2001?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD) has initiated investigations in 31 fully documented petitions